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PROGRAM ABC World News Tonight STATION WJLA TV  
ABC Network

DATE April 13, 1982 7:00 PM CITY Washington DC

SUBJECT Communications During the Crisis

FRANK REYNOLDS: Officially, the United States has tried to appear neutral between Britain and Argentina. As President Reagan said when the crisis first erupted, "They are both our friends." However, ABC News correspondent Carl Bernstein has this report on cooperation between London and Washington.

CARL BERSTEIN: Officials here have told ABC News that the United States has been providing Great Britain with extensive assistance in its military preparations. As described to ABC News by several officials at the Pentagon and State Department, the assistance is in four areas:

Communications. The United States is providing a vital link in Britain's communications with its submarine fleet in the blockade area around the Falklands. The U.S. has an extensive network of satellites that can beam signals to the British subs and the armada now steaming toward the South Atlantic.

Intelligence. The United States has mounted what officials say is a huge intelligence survey of Argentine military activity, and has passed on virtually every piece of significant information to the British. That information included early photographic evidence suggesting the possibility of an Argentine invasion of the Falklands.

Weather forecasting. U.S. satellites are providing information for the British on weather on iceberg conditions in the South Atlantic.

Supply. The United States, which is bound by treaty to share use of Ascension Island with Britain, is undertaking a massive supply operation there for the British fleet. Storage

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tanks have been topped off with more than two million gallons of jet fuel for British aircraft.

What all this adds up to is a tacit U.S. commitment to America's closest ally, Britain, despite President Reagan's suggestion that the United States intends to pursue a neutral course between nations he has described as two good friends.

REYNOLDS: Late this afternoon, high-ranking officials of the government denied that the United States is extending any help to the British, military intelligence or any other information. However, a Pentagon spokesman today confirmed the main points in Carl Bernstein's report. And other officials in other departments of the government have also said the U.S. is giving the British intelligence assistance.